DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 417 169 SP 037 815

AUTHOR King, Dan L.; Taylor-King, Sheila
TITLE The Policy-Making Influence of Teacher Educators on Professional Teaching Standards Boards.
PUB DATE 1998-02-27
NOTE 8p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (50th, New Orleans, LA, February 27, 1998).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College Faculty; Educational Quality; Elementary Secondary Education; Faculty Development; Higher Education; Preservice Teacher Education; *State Standards; Teacher Certification; *Teacher Educators; *Teacher Influence; Teacher Role

ABSTRACT

A survey examined the perceived influence of teacher educators on the 13 autonomous state teaching standard boards now in existence. A total of 125 board members, selected at random from the directories of the boards, received the mailed survey, and 73 percent responded. According to the results, all non-teacher educator board members rated the influence of teacher educators higher than did the teacher educators themselves. Non-teacher educators identified four themes that inhibited expanded influence among board members: (1) defensiveness about criticisms of the quality of teacher education, (2) inclinations of teacher education institution representatives to represent positions of their home institutions to the exclusion of broader perspectives, (3) general resistance to considering alternative means of acquiring knowledge and competencies necessary to qualify for initial teacher licensure, and (4) insufficient demonstration of commitment to the board's work. Most teacher educators expressed malaise regarding their influence or the possibility of expanded influence on the board. They stated a belief that teachers and narrowly-defined teacher interests dominated board decisions. They felt that their influence was limited by their role, which put them outside of the most influential realm. Both teacher educators and non-teacher educators believed that teacher educators could make greater contributions to the work of professional teaching standards boards, but both groups believed teacher educators were limited in their influence by different factors. (SM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 417 169

The Policy-Making Influence of Teacher Educators on Professional Teaching Standards Boards

Dan L. King, Professor
College of Education • University of Wyoming

Sheila Taylor-King, Assistant Professor
Casper College Center • University of Wyoming

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, New Orleans, Louisiana, February 27, 1998

One expressed purpose of the National Education Association is to advance the interests of the profession of teaching. To this end, the association has identified the following ten professional items which, if accomplished, would significantly contribute to the advancement of the profession:

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
D. King
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1. Recruiting capable and promising students into teaching;
2. Setting and enforcing high standards for entry into teaching;
3. Setting and guaranteeing high standards in teacher preservice programs;
4. Establishing and enforcing high standards for all students graduating from preservice teaching programs;
5. Implementing sound teacher intern programs;
6. Guaranteeing that high standards are met for initial licensing;
7. Ensuring that quality new-teacher induction programs exist in all school

SP037815

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

systems;

8. Requiring that high standards are established and adhered to for the continuation of teachers' licenses;

9. Ensuring that teacher-driven and quality-based professional development is available and enjoyed be all licensed teachers; and

10. Making advanced certification programs available to all teachers.

Thus, it is not surprising that state NEA affiliates have led efforts in several states to establish autonomous teaching standards boards. The boards, which now number 13 nationally[1] comprise a total of 169 members. Of this total membership, almost 12 percent (n=20) are teacher educators; however, the actual number of teacher educator representatives on state-level teaching standards boards ranges from zero to 23 percent.

A survey was developed to determine the perceived influence of teacher educators on the 13 autonomous state teaching standards boards. The survey was sent to 125 board members who were selected at random from among the directory lists of the various boards. After two mailings, a response rate of 73 percent was achieved. Responses to survey items are reported in the following table:

---

[1] Autonomous teaching standards boards have been established in the following states: California, Georgia, Hawaii, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Minnesota, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, Texas, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

Item	Responses of teacher education members	Responses of all other board members
In general, to what degree are the teacher education institutional representatives on your teaching standards board held in high esteem by other members of the board? (5 = very high esteem)	3.1	3.7
To what extent do teacher educator representatives on your board influence the development of policies regarding standards for initial licensure of teachers? (5 = great deal of influence)	3.1	4.2
... continuing licensure of teachers? (5 = great deal of influence)	3.0	4.2
... requirements for continuing professional development? (5 = great deal of influence)	3.2	4.0
... standards for initial licensure of administrators? (5 = great deal of influence)	2.8	3.1

In every instance, non-teacher educator board members rated the influence of teacher educators as higher than did the teacher educators themselves. Comments by board members made in response to open-ended items were revealing. Non-teacher educator representatives identified four themes which inhibit expanded influence among

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

board members: (1) defensiveness about criticisms of the quality of teacher education; (2) inclinations of teacher education institution representatives to represent the positions of their home institutions to the exclusion of broader perspectives; (3) general resistance to considering alternative means of acquiring knowledge and competencies necessary to qualify for initial teacher licensure; and (4) insufficient demonstration of commitment to the board's work. (This last item is noteworthy because it was mentioned by representatives from more than ½ of the state boards. Specific negative behaviors cited were frequent absence from meetings and failure to read background materials and complete required pre-meeting preparation assignments.)

In three-quarters of the responses from teacher educator board members, the respondents expressed a malaise regarding their influence or the possibility of expanded influence on the board. In general, teacher education board members stated a belief that teachers and narrowly-defined teacher interests dominate board decisions.

Two groups of board members—teacher educators and non-teacher educators—each expressed the belief that teacher educators could make greater contributions to the work of professional teaching standards boards. Teacher educators expressed a dispirited opinion that their influence was limited by their role which—by definition—put them outside of the most influential realm. Non-teacher educators opined that the influence of teacher educators was more likely limited by individual behavioral/performance characteristics rather than by uncontrollable external influences.

There are at least two possible explanations for the observed differences in perception of influence. One—and, perhaps the simplest—explanation is that as a group, teacher education representatives on professional teaching standards boards take their work less seriously than do their counterpart K-12 teaching profession representatives. A second explanation—one that might provide a rationale for the reported "parochial perspective" of teacher educators, but not one that explains the criticisms of teacher educators being under prepared for standards boards meetings—is that the teacher educators on the boards frequently bring a perspective of practicality to discussions of principle. Their contributions may include discussions of why or why not certain matters under discussion are practical or impractical in a higher education setting.

Whichever of the above explanations is accurate, teacher educators need to be concerned about the perception of their status when serving on or working with state-level professional teaching standards boards. Although other board members rated teacher education representatives higher than the teacher educators rated themselves, comments indicated two possible areas of concern. First, teacher educator representatives on standards boards need to be very attentive to pre-meeting assignments and must demonstrate a level of preparation at least at the level of other board members. Secondly, teacher educators board members should be sensitive to the use of language which give the impression of parochial perspective. Although it is important for standards boards to know about the practical limitations of matters under consideration, teacher education

representatives should avoid the use of "at my institution" language and, instead, should discuss limitations or practical matters from a more generalized higher education perspective.

A report, ***Characteristics of Independent State Teacher Professional Standards Boards***, was prepared by the National Education Association. For further information, contact: NEA Teacher Development Team members, Nesa Chappelle (202/822-7701, nchappelle@nea.org), Chuck Williams (202/822-77033, chwilliams@nea.org), or Aurora Arcilla (202/822-7392, aarcilla@nea.org).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE